

R 030950Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2036

UNCLAS JAKARTA 000613

STATE FOR S/P, EAP - MARCIEL, EAP/PD - RFERGUSON-AUGUSTUS, EAP/MTS,
ECA/A/S/A - DMORA, ECA/A/E/EAP - WBate

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OEXC](#) [SCUL](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: TOP INDONESIAN FOUNDATION WANTS U.S. PARTNERSHIP ON HIGHER
EDUCATION

¶1. (SBU) During Secretary Clinton's visit to Indonesia she supported an expanded bilateral relationship in the field of education. Our challenge: to cultivate sustainable educational partnerships between the U.S. and Indonesia by expanding university partnerships and increasing the number of Indonesians studying in the U.S. and Americans studying in Indonesia. Indonesia's Sampoerna Foundation presented Ambassador Hume with a huge opportunity: Sampoerna offered \$30 million to build a higher education partnership contingent on a matching contribution in the form of goods and services from a U.S. University. We should give serious consideration to this proposal and seek funds to match Sampoerna's. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) The U.S.-Indonesia comprehensive partnership can establish thriving links and a network of U.S. engagement that goes beyond traditional government to government diplomatic ties. Post defined its challenge as finding reliable Indonesian entities able to advance an educational partnership in a sustainable way, and committed to creating independent, reasoned citizens in a modern pluralistic society. The Sampoerna Foundation is an educational partner of the highest merit.

¶3. (SBU) The Sampoerna Foundation (SF) operates the first large scale, secular, private educational foundation in Indonesia. SF is ardently committed to advancing education, especially to intellectually able but impoverished youth across Indonesia. The foundation is funded by one of the wealthiest families in South East Asia, who personally know the cost of ethnic and religious intolerance (e.g., 1998 riots targeting Chinese Indonesians). Their deep commitment to non-ethnic and secular philanthropy is grounded not only in altruism, but by a need to ensure that their country is a mature tolerant society based on rule of law that will protect their own interests as part of an ethnic minority.

¶4. (SBU) The immediate higher education level goal is a modern secular university, sufficiently staffed and endowed to offer joint degrees from Indonesia and the U.S., and accessible to students from all income levels. Successful graduates will be economically and professionally successful citizens with values of civic morality and secular engagement. The Sampoerna Foundation enjoys an international reputation based on awarding scholarships to Indonesians for study at universities in Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. But it contends that deep social development cannot be based on those few students allowed to attend overseas universities. Post concurs.

¶5. (SBU) In meetings with Ambassador Hume, Sampoerna Foundation Chief Putera Sampoerna commented that the new administration's positive reputation here offered a one time opportunity to reinvent the relationship, based on a mutually beneficial education partnership. Putera Sampoerna made a personal commitment to Ambassador Hume to be an Indonesian partner to achieve our mutual education goals. Sampoerna cited the Foundation's deep knowledge and extensive business experience in Indonesia over many decades and gave clear reasons as to why a new path was needed. He said the effectiveness of bilateral and multilateral assistance to Indonesia has been uneven because of the sole reliance on host government contacts. SF sees itself as more a long-term steward than temporary resident or donor. Putera Sampoerna concluded with a dramatic challenge: \$30 million U.S. dollars to build the partnership contingent on a matching contribution in the form of goods and services from a U.S. University or other U.S. sources. He wants a long term partnership with a U.S. university that will include faculty exchanges, research development, and administrative advice

with shared best practices. SF already has licenses, approvals, initial faculty and curriculum for the first departments and the first tertiary students could enter within seven months.

¶16. (SBU) The Foundation has identified the ideal type of U.S. partner as one with experience operating a university level program with departments of agriculture, engineering, applied research and teacher education focused on preparing teachers for careers in rural or less advanced areas. Sampoerna Foundation specifically asked the embassy to open discussions with Iowa State University (due to a recent Iowa trade delegation meeting) but also showed openness to other major land grant institutions. They also noted they were meeting with Georgetown on specific religious and political study projects. They emphasized the core goal of the Government of Indonesia and Foundation to expand the number and competence of Indonesian teachers.

¶17. (SBU) Ambassador Hume authorized an embassy officer to meet with Iowa State administration leadership during the officer's other travel in the region. Sampoerna Foundation and Iowa State University held meetings with department heads, chancellor level administrators, and Foundation leaders to discuss a proposed educational partnership. The results were impressive. The University and SF held multiple telephone meetings and exchanged information culminating in a March 15, 2009 visit to Indonesia by Dr. David Holger, Dean of the Graduate School and Dr. David Whaley, Dean of the School of Education paid for by the University and hosted by SF. The foundation organized visits to their sponsored high schools and foundation offices as well as meetings with the founders and a reception at their headquarters. Guests included Ambassador Hume and embassy staff from multiple sections.

¶18. (SBU) The Iowa State officials privately told Ambassador Hume that this was a high priority for their president and their long term mission as a public land grant university. The SF officials informed the embassy that the founder and foundation president will travel to Iowa for further discussions in April and then would like to meet USG officials in Washington from State, USDA, USAID, or other relevant agencies.

¶19. (SBU) The importance of this potential partnership and saliency of USG support arises from the nature and vigor of the Indonesian partner. Partnering with the Sampoerna Foundation is an opportunity to further a partnership not dependent on the host government yet capable of assuring host government support due to the prominence of the foundation and its economic role. The Foundation sees the USG as key to fostering a successful, thoughtful, and effective program that will allow us to achieve multiple USG strategic goals.

¶110. (SBU) Major benefits to the U.S. include ongoing and significant U.S. exports of professional services, placement of well educated Americans abroad, access to and dissemination of applied research, and a model for U.S. tertiary partnerships with civil society. The other USG benefit is a future corps of Indonesian and American faculty, administrators, and graduates, skilled in the technical fields of agriculture, engineering and education with a deep knowledge of the resources and language of a strategic South East Asian country. The partnership is modeled on sustained U.S. tertiary education structures and experience where the federal government role is not dominant but merely supportive and additive to the core parties and beneficiaries.

¶111. (SBU) This partnership will create a critical network of personal relationships and partnerships. This is neither an easy task nor within our traditional statecraft and public diplomacy structures. We are still analyzing where our assistance and role will be most effective. The next clear USG action is to assist a committed major U.S. land grant institution to enter into this partnership with Sampoerna and meet the challenge of their offer.

ACTION REQUEST: that the State Department meet with Putera Sampoerna at appropriately high-level when he visits Washington in April.

HUME